



Effective Questioning Question Bank

This question bank provides a collection of ready-made questions that teachers can use to check understanding, uncover misconceptions, deepen thinking, and promote meaningful classroom discussion. Organised by purpose, the questions can be adapted across subjects and age groups, helping teachers plan purposeful questioning that informs teaching and supports pupil progress.

An effective question bank should do more than simply test recall. It should help teachers identify misconceptions, probe understanding, encourage deeper thinking, and promote discussion. The questions below are organised into categories so teachers can quickly select questions that match their purpose.

1. Recall and Retrieval Questions

Use these to check whether pupils can remember key knowledge.

- ✓ What happened?
- ✓ Who was involved?
- ✓ When did this occur?
- ✓ Where does this take place?
- ✓ What is the definition of...?
- ✓ Can you list three examples of...?
- ✓ What did we learn last lesson?
- ✓ What are the key facts you remember?
- ✓ Which keyword best describes...?
- ✓ What information can you retrieve from memory?

2. Checking for understanding

Use these to check comprehension and understanding.

- ✓ Can you explain that in your own words?
- ✓ What does this mean?
- ✓ How would you summarise this idea?
- ✓ Why do you think this happened?
- ✓ What is the main message?
- ✓ How would you describe this to someone younger?
- ✓ What is the difference between these two ideas?
- ✓ What evidence supports your answer?
- ✓ Can you give an example?
- ✓ What makes you think that?

3. Probing Questions

Use these to deepen thinking and encourage justification.

- ✓ Why do you think that?
- ✓ Can you explain your reasoning?
- ✓ What evidence supports your view?
- ✓ How did you reach that conclusion?
- ✓ What led you to that answer?
- ✓ Can you prove it?
- ✓ Which part of the text supports your thinking?
- ✓ What makes that significant?
- ✓ Why might someone disagree?
- ✓ Is there another way to explain it?

4. Checking for Misconceptions

Use these to uncover misunderstandings.

- ✓ What might someone get wrong here?
- ✓ Why is this answer incorrect?
- ✓ Which option is the best answer and why?
- ✓ What is the common misconception?
- ✓ How would you correct this statement?
- ✓ What's missing from this explanation?
- ✓ Which answer is least accurate?
- ✓ Why might a pupil think that?
- ✓ How can we improve this response?
- ✓ What's the flaw in this reasoning?



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5. Comparison Questions

Use these to develop analytical thinking.

- ✓ How are these similar?
- ✓ How are these different?
- ✓ Which is more effective?
- ✓ Which is more important?
- ✓ What do these have in common?
- ✓ How does one compare with the other?
- ✓ Which would you choose and why?
- ✓ What changes between the two examples?
- ✓ What remains the same?
- ✓ Which has the greater impact?

6. Interpretation Questions

Particularly useful in English and Humanities.

- ✓ What could this suggest?
- ✓ What impression is created?
- ✓ How might the audience/reader react?
- ✓ What alternative interpretation is possible?
- ✓ What might the writer want us to think?
- ✓ How does this make the reader feel?
- ✓ What is implied here?
- ✓ What deeper meaning might there be?
- ✓ Why has this been presented in this way?
- ✓ How else could this be interpreted?

7. Application Questions

Use these to transfer knowledge to new contexts.

- ✓ How could you apply this knowledge elsewhere?
- ✓ Can you use this idea in a different situation?
- ✓ Where might this be useful in real life?
- ✓ How would this work in another context?
- ✓ Can you solve a new problem using this approach?
- ✓ How would you use this strategy independently?
- ✓ What would happen if the situation changed?
- ✓ How could this help you in the future?
- ✓ What advice would you give someone else?
- ✓ Which skill are you applying here?

8. Evaluation Questions

Use these to encourage judgement and critical thinking.

- ✓ Do you agree? Why?
- ✓ Which option is best?
- ✓ How effective is this?
- ✓ What are the strengths?
- ✓ What are the weaknesses?
- ✓ Is this a convincing argument?
- ✓ What would you improve?
- ✓ How successful was the approach?
- ✓ What criteria are you using to judge this?
- ✓ To what extent do you agree?

9. Discussion Questions

Use these to promote classroom talk.

- ✓ What do others think?
- ✓ Does anyone have a different view?
- ✓ Who can build on that answer?
- ✓ Can someone challenge that idea?
- ✓ Who agrees and why?
- ✓ Who disagrees and why?
- ✓ Can anyone add to that?
- ✓ What questions do you still have?
- ✓ Has anyone changed their mind?
- ✓ What new idea has emerged from the discussion?

10. Stretch and 'Take it Further' Questions

Use these to extend learning and challenge thinking.

- ✓ What if the opposite were true?
- ✓ How might this change over time?
- ✓ What are the wider implications?
- ✓ Can you connect this to another topic?
- ✓ What patterns can you identify?
- ✓ What prediction can you make?
- ✓ What questions does this raise?
- ✓ How might an expert respond?
- ✓ Can you develop this idea further?
- ✓ What is the most sophisticated interpretation you can make?



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Teacher Prompt Questions

When pupils struggle, consider using prompts rather than giving the answer:

- ✓ Where could you look for a clue?
- ✓ Which keyword might help?
- ✓ What do you already know?
- ✓ Can you eliminate any options?
- ✓ What happened before this?
- ✓ Which piece of evidence seems most important?
- ✓ Can you start with what you know for certain?
- ✓ What does the question actually ask?
- ✓ Which strategy could help here?
- ✓ Have you seen something similar before?

